

VZCZCXRO2728
RR RUEHGI RUEHRN RUEHROV
DE RUEHKM #0290/01 0771250
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 181250Z MAR 09
FM AMEMBASSY KAMPALA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 1250
INFO RUEHKG/AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM 0786
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 7198
RUCNIAD/IGAD COLLECTIVE
RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHMFIUU/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RHMFIUU/CJTF HOA

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 KAMPALA 000290

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

DEPT PASS TO USAID AND OFDA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [EAGR](#) [ECON](#) [MASS](#) [PREL](#) [SENV](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [UG](#)

SUBJECT: UGANDA'S KARAMOJA REGION: THE FINAL FRONTIER FOR SECURITY
AND DEVELOPMENT (PART II)

REF: Kampala 0288

¶1. (SBU) Summary: The U.S. Mission is moving forward with a series of activities to address sustainable security and development in Karamoja, Uganda's poorest region. The current environment of improved security and renewed domestic and international interest in addressing dire humanitarian and development needs in Uganda's Karamoja region has made U.S. engagement possible and necessary. Mission development programs will support efforts to improve agriculture, food security, and economic productivity. On security, we will work with the Ugandan military, the police, civil society, and the central and local governments to enhance civil-military relations, undertake conflict mitigation and reconciliation activities, and establish law and order. These interventions will further help reduce the number of cattle raids and associated violence and build trust and cooperation between communities. The Mission will encourage the Ugandan Government to improve basic social service delivery and other activities outlined in its Karamoja Integrated Disarmament and Development Plan (KIDDP). End Summary.

¶2. (U) This is the second of two cables on the violent and long-neglected region of Karamoja in northeast Uganda. Reftel paints a picture of the region's violent past, its improving security, as well as its wrenching poverty and the multiple development challenges it faces. This cable looks at prospects for new USG interventions in Karamoja, which are now possible in light of improved security and greater recognition of the region's importance to wider peace, stability, and development in Uganda.

- - - - -
Well-Crafted Development Plan Collects Dust
- - - - -

¶3. (SBU) The Government of Uganda (GOU) launched the KIDDP in 2008 to guide its disarmament program, enhance peace building, and spur development in the Karamoja region. The KIDDP was not originally developed as part of the Government's larger Peace Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) for Northern Uganda, but was later "folded" into the PRDP. The three-year PRDP was launched in late 2007 to guide development interventions for war-torn northern Uganda, with a focus at that time on those districts to the west of Karamoja that had been affected by the 23-year insurgency against the Lord's Resistance Army. The GOU, through the KIDDP, seeks to ensure adequate security for the people of Karamoja; establish law and order; strengthen social service delivery; support alternative livelihood development; and conduct information campaigns on voluntary disarmament, conflict resolution, and community leadership. Local officials, civil society leaders, and even military officers agree the KIDDP, while a good plan on paper, has not made any difference on the ground yet in Karamoja in terms of

development because the GOU has not provided the resources needed to actually implement it.

First Lady Appointed Minister for Karamoja

¶4. (SBU) President Museveni's announcement of a cabinet reshuffle on February 17 named his wife, First Lady Janet Museveni, as the new Minister of State for Karamoja. Ms. Museveni's profile has raised hopes of renewed central government interest in Karamoja. Local officials, many of whom belong to the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) party, commented to EmbOffs during the February 16-21 inter-agency visit to Karamoja that a more high-profile representative with the ear of the president could be helpful. Others dismissed the appointment as mere political posturing meant to solidify NRM support in Karamoja ahead of the 2011 presidential elections. Nonetheless, Janet Museveni traveled to the region a week after her appointment, garnering significant media coverage. She has since met with donors, including the USG, to discuss their activities in Karamoja.

Current USG Investments in Karamoja Limited

¶5. (U) Aside from humanitarian food relief, USG security and development intervention in the Karamoja region has been minimal in years past. On the humanitarian front, in Fiscal Year 2008, USAID provided the World Food Program (WFP) \$46 million to support the latter's Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation for Northern Uganda, which includes both Karamoja and LRA-affected areas. An additional \$10.4 million in emergency food aid has been provided thus far in 2009. Looking now towards non-humanitarian assistance, USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) recently

KAMPALA 00000290 002.2 OF 003

awarded a \$5 million grant to Mercy Corps to look at ways to address Karamoja's chronic food insecurity. The program will address overall food insecurity by enhancing agricultural production and economic activity through the distribution of fast maturing and drought-resistant crops, work programs to improve market access, and improved animal health services across all five of Karamoja's districts.

¶6. (U) In addition to this funding for humanitarian relief and food security, the U.S. Mission has provided modest funding - totaling just over \$1.6 million - to support conflict management and reconciliation activities in Karamoja. The \$1 million USAID-funded IRC program to support the formation of peace committees in Nakapiripirit, Moroto, and Kotido districts has enhanced dialogue between rival communities and helped efforts to track and recover stolen animals. The peace committees have also been key early warning systems for reporting impending raids and security incidents. Funding for the IRC activity will conclude in May 2010. IRC also implements a Department of Labor-funded program which provides educational opportunities for children at risk for child labor in Moroto. Additionally, USAID provided Mercy Corps with nearly \$600,000 to strengthen local and district mechanisms for conflict mitigation, response and reconciliation; foster peace and reconciliation through dialogue, joint monitoring and government/civil society consultations; and support livelihood activities in the Kaabong and Kotido districts. Funding to Mercy Corps will conclude in 2011. Some limited support through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) has also reached the area.

U.S. Mission to Uganda: Outlining a Karamoja Strategy

¶7. (SBU) The U.S. Mission to Uganda, as outlined in our 2011 Mission Strategic Plan, seeks to support efforts to transition from humanitarian assistance to programs that provide for long-term reconciliation, social, and economic development, and security in northern Uganda. In Karamoja specifically, the Mission seeks to find new ways to encourage and support the GOU, civil society groups, and other donors to address the challenges of sustainable security and development. Without these investments, insecurity could undermine U.S. interest in bringing lasting peace and security

to Uganda and the wider Great Lakes and Horn of Africa Regions.

¶8. (SBU) The Mission will continue to support humanitarian food relief programs in the Karamoja region to help meet immediate needs in the short-term. Additionally, with the improved security outlook, USAID can now consider expanding existing and new development programs to include the Karamoja districts. The Mission will urge the GOU to seriously address staffing and financial gaps across all service delivery sectors, and work with the European Commission, Irish AID, and other donors currently active in the region. With these interventions, the Mission seeks to improve agricultural production, food security, and economic productivity.

¶9. (SBU) The Mission will also scale-up efforts to support stabilization and security initiatives in the Karamoja region through greater support for conflict mitigation and reconciliation activities, the restoration of law and order, fortification of regional conflict resolution mechanisms, and the strengthening of the already improved civilian-military relationship. Programs will continue to support peace committee activities and early warning systems to foster greater dialogue and cooperation on tough issues. Long-term, the Mission will seek to support GOU efforts to establish a civilian policing and judiciary presence in the region. Regionally, we will work with USAID's East Africa Mission to expand its cross-border conflict management and peace building project (Peace II) to the Ugandan-Kenyan border area. Peace II will assist efforts to strengthen linkages between communities, civil society, and government at local and regional levels.

¶10. (SBU) The Mission is considering a request to the Africa Command's Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) for a small Civil Affairs (CA) Team to work with the Uganda People's Defense Forces (UPDF) in Karamoja to enhance civil-military relations. The proposed CJTF-HOA CA Team would work with the UPDF and Civil-Military Cooperation Center (CMCC) participants to strengthen the unit's policies, procedures, and protocols for collecting, disseminating, and acting on information. The team would identify appropriate classroom and in-stride civil-military

KAMPALA 00000290 003 OF 003

operations training for the UPDF, to include information sharing, human rights, law of war, communications, and information verification. The CA Team would also identify resources for small-scale community relations activities and opportunities for Medical Civil Action Projects and Veterinary Civil Action Projects interventions in coordination with the Mission's Northern Uganda Working Group.

¶11. (SBU) We will encourage the UPDF and the Uganda Human Rights Commission (UHRC) to reach a viable solution on the parallel CMCC issue (see refTel for background) to ensure more effective engagement. With these interventions, the Mission seeks to further reduce the number of cattle raids, road ambushes, and other violent crime associated with the traditional practice of cattle rustling. Additionally, USG efforts will further help to professionalize the UPDF through civil-military capacity building and improve the institution's perception among the Karamojong.

- - - -
Comment
- - - -

¶12. (SBU) Karamoja is literally Uganda's final frontier. For years it was characterized by lawlessness and cattle raiding, that was worsened with the influx of small arms. We believe that the conditions and timing are right for U.S. assistance, applied in coordination and in partnership with the GOU and other donors, to help stabilize Karamoja and improve humanitarian and development indicators among the Karamojong, Uganda's most marginalized ethnic group. Failure to address Karamoja's daunting security and development challenges would not be an issue if the region could be cordoned off from the rest of Uganda. But that is not an option, and inevitably any backsliding towards violence and instability in Karamoja would threaten the viability of ongoing USG and other international donor investments in northern Uganda. Fortunately, there is broad consensus on this point, and the time is ripe for new

activism in the region.
BROWNING